SUPERMAN
ACTION COMICS #786
SUPERMAN
ACTION COMICS
JOE KELLY
PASCUAL FERRY
SCOTT HANNA
DIRECT SALES
78611
7 61941 20001 9
$2.25 US • $3.75 CAN
FEB 2002

METROPOLIS. THE CITY OF TOMORROW.
-- BY THAT LINGEPATCHKE SNOWMAN OVER THERE IS WHERE I WAS WOMANHANDLED BY ALIENS JUST BEFORE THE WAR. THAT'S HISTORY, ALBERT. ARE WE PLOTZING YET?
YEAH, SURE. WHERE'S SUPERMAN --?
OH, HE'S SO PRECIOUS, BUNNY! SUCH A LITTLE MAN! THE GIRLS MUST LOOOOOVE YOU!
I GUESS. DO YOU SEE HIM?
OH! OH! SPEAKING OF! HARRIET KIBBLE HAS A NIECE UP FROM BROOKLYN YOU MUST MEET! SHE'S A LITTLE FRUMPY...
...BUT SHE'S ON ATKINS AND YOU CAN SEE HER KNEECAPS AGAIN.
IT... OH MY GOD... IT'S -- LOOK... UP IN THE SKY!
IS THAT A BIRD? CLOSE YOUR MOUTH, AL -- YOU DON'T WANT AN EARLY CHANUKAH PRESENT --
NO, IT'S A PLANE YOU FOOL!
WHICH REMINDS ME -- BOCA RATON. MILLIONAIRES WITH ONE FOOT ON THE BEACH AND THE OTHER IN THE GRAVE. WHEN DO WE LEAVE --?
IT'S SUPERMAN! AND HE'S FIGHTING SATAN!
OY VEY. THERE GOES MY TWO O'CLOCK WAX.

8

JOE KELLY WRITER
PASCUAL FERRY PENCILLER
SCOTT HANNA INKER
MOOSE BAUMANN COLORS
COMICRAFT LETTERS
TOM PALMER JR. ASSISTANT EDITOR
EDDIE BERGANZA EDITOR
SUPERMAN CREATED BY
JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

THE SEVENTH SEAL IS BROKEN!

LET THE SKIES RAIN BLOOD! LET THE HEARTS OF THE RIGHTEOUS BURST IN FEAR OF MY DARK RAPTURE!

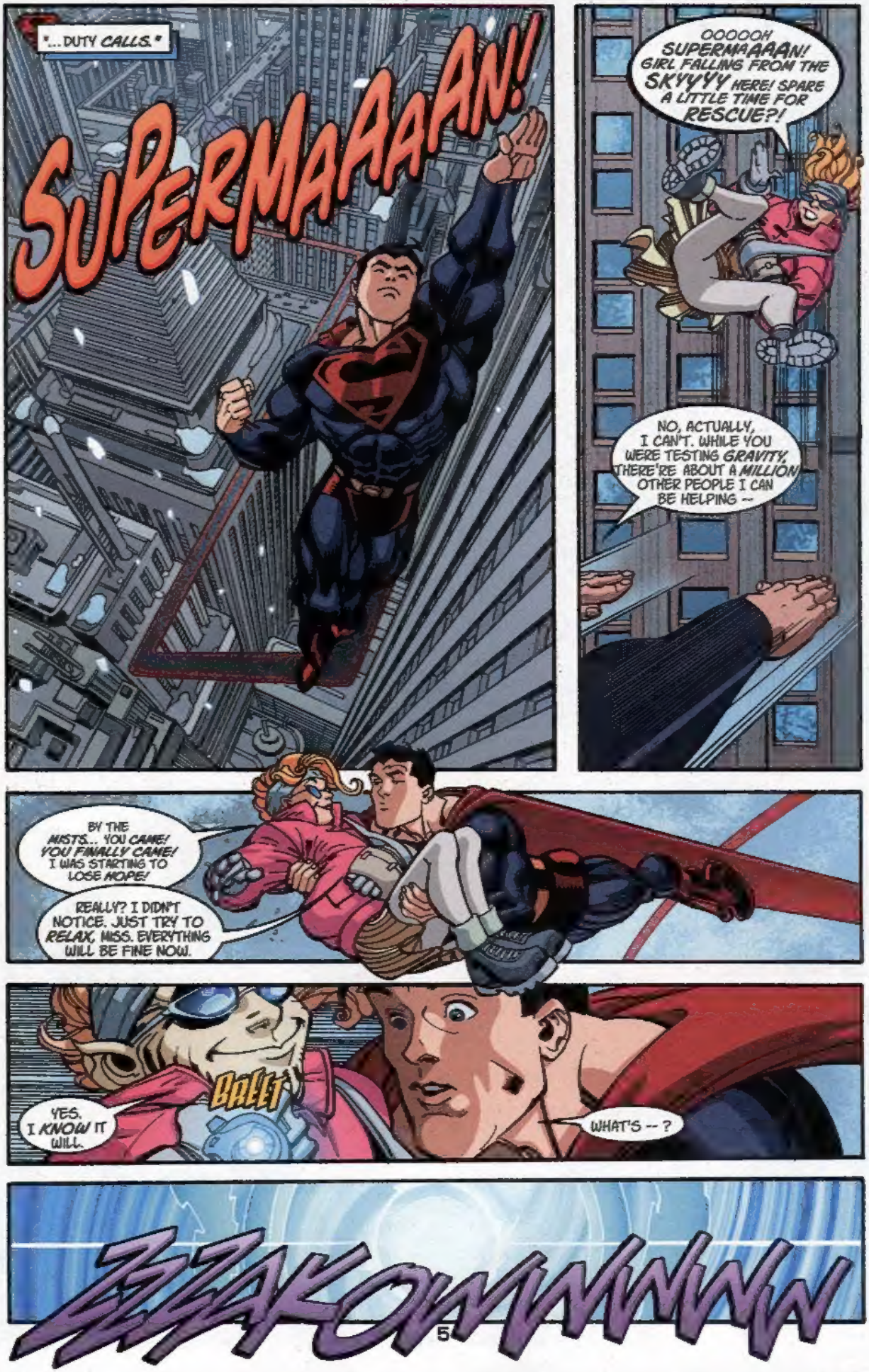
ICONOKLASH COMES! AND DEATH FOLLOWS!

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IF I DON'T BREAK OUT THE *ROSARY* AND START BEGGING FOR FORGIVENESS JUST YET...

...BUT I'VE BEEN THROUGH *HELL ONCE* ALREADY THIS YEAR.

ACTION COMICS 786. February, 2002. Published monthly by DC Comics, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ACTION COMICS, DC Comics Subscriptions, PO. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate $27.00. Canadian subscribers must add $12.00 for postage and GST. GST # is R125921072. All foreign countries must add $12.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 2002 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed on recyclable paper.
DC Comics, A division of Warner Bros.–An AOL Time Warner Company
Printed in Canada.

FOOMP
AND YOU AIN'T IT, PAL.
YOUR MORTAL FLESH IS AS NOTHING TO HEAVEN'S OUTCAST! NEITHER YOUR STRENGTH NOR YOUR MISGUIDED FAITH WILL SAVE --
ZIP IT, "HOT STUFF." I JUST BLEW OUT YOUR HELLFIRE.
System failure. Unit powering down.. IMAGING systems FLIGHT systems... DEFENSE --
OH POOP.
FULL system... shut down -- BZZZT--
...
I'M TAKING CONFESSIONS IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.
THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT?
FAITH... NO ONE HAS ANY FAITH IN THIS TOWN -- SO I TRIED TO GIVE SOME! NONE OF THAT HAPPY LOVE GARBAGE... GOOD OLD-FASHIONED VENGEFUL WRATH --
-- THEN I WAS GONNA ROB A BANK TO PAY FOR THE SUIT.
CRAZY, HUH?
WHENEVER YOU SKIP TOWN FOR A DAY, ALL THE IDIOTS COME OUT. THEY NEVER LEARN.
YOU HEARD ABOUT THAT CRAZY JUMPER TRYING TO FIND YOU --?
...
ACTUALLY... I THINK I JUST DID. EXCUSE ME, OFFICER...


"...DUTY CALLS."
SUPERMAAAAN!
OOOOOH SUPERMAAAAN! GIRL FALLING FROM THE SKYYYY HERE! SPARE A LITTLE TIME FOR RESCUE?!
NO, ACTUALLY, I CAN'T. WHILE YOU WERE TESTING GRAVITY, THERE'RE ABOUT A MILLION OTHER PEOPLE I CAN BE HELPING --
BY THE MISTS... YOU CAME! YOU FINALLY CAME! I WAS STARTING TO LOSE HOPE!
REALLY? I DIDN'T NOTICE. JUST TRY TO RELAX, MISS. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE NOW.
BALET
YES. I KNOW IT WILL.
WHAT'S -- ?
BZZKOWWWW

GOT HIM!
-- THAT?
OUCH.
EVERYONE! HE'S HERE! SUPERMAN'S HEEEERE!
WHERE. IS. HERE?
ANSWER CAREFULLY, AND DON'T PRESS ANY MORE BUTTONS, OR I MIGHT BE FORCED TO REDEFINE "FINGERS" FOR YOU.
YOU KNOW, YOU SEEM MUCH SWEETER ON TELEVISION...
ASK HER.
PLEASE, HOLD NO IRE TOWARDS THE CHILD. SHE IS SIMPLY THE COURIER.
I AM CALLED THE GRANITE MOTHER, IN YOUR TONGUE. 'TIS I WHO HAD YOU BROUGHT HERE...
...THAT I MIGHT FALL TO MY KNEES AND BEG YOU TO BE A MESSIAH TO MY PEOPLE.

"B'DARTHA HAS BEEN A SIMPLE, PEACEFUL PLANET FOR EONS. WHEN THE TYRANT CAME, WE WERE GROSSLY UNPREPARED FOR HIS UNIQUE BRAND OF TERROR AND OPPRESSION.
"HE TOPPLED OUR GOVERNMENTS AND SUBJUGATED OUR WAY OF LIFE IN UNDER A MONTH. THE DEAD ARE COUNTLESS.
"THE TYRANT USES US TO RAPE THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF B'DARTHA, WORKING US DAY AND NIGHT UNDER CONSTANT FEAR OF TORTURE AND DEATH.
"MY PEOPLE ARE STRONG, MAKE NO MISTAKE. B'DARTHA FORGES HEARTY BODIES UNDER HER INTENSE ATMOSPHERE AND GRAVITY... BUT IN TIME... ALL BREAK.
"WHEN MY PEOPLE FINALLY FALTER... THEY ARE TAKEN TO THE TYRANT, WHERE THE MONSTER... EATS THEIR SPIRITS...
"...DEVOURS THEM.
"AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT HE CLAIMS; NONE WHO GO TO HIM HAVE RETURNED TO DISPUTE IT."
THERE WAS NO WORD FOR "HELL" IN OUR LANGUAGE, UNTIL THE TYRANT CAME. THIS MUST END.
IT'S... HORRIFYING. THERE ARE NONE AMONG YOU WHO CAN STAND UP TO THIS "TYRANT"?
A HANDFUL OF US HAVE MANAGED SOMETHING CLOSE TO A RESISTANCE, MAINLY FROM LUCK. WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MAKING WAR --
-- EVEN THE TECH I USED TO... UH... RECRUIT YOU IS STOLEN FROM HIM. THAT'S ABOUT AS UPPITY AS WE CAN GET.
WHY ME?
WHY YOU? YOU SAVED THE UNIVERSE!

YOU BENT THE RULES OF SPACE AND TIME TO END THE WAR OF WARS! WHO ELSE DO YOU CALL WHEN YOU NEED TO KICK —
THOUGH IMPETUOUS, S'ALLAH SPEAKS THE TRUTH. YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU VIA OUR INTERCEPTION OF ALIEN TRANSMISSIONS.
YOU HAVE BEEN A PART OF B'DIRTHA LORE FOR MANY YEARS... YOUR SILENT FOLLOWERS.
I SAID WE NEEDED A MESSIAH, A DELIVERER... I MEANT IT.
YOUR LEGEND IS AS LAW TO A PEOPLE MOST DESPERATE. IT IS MY HOPE THAT, UNDER YOUR LEAD, THEY MIGHT FIND THE WILL TO STAND. TO FIGHT.
CAN YOU DO THIS, SUPERMAN? CAN YOU ADOPT US AS YOU HAVE THE EARTH, AND FREE US?
...
THOUGH I APPRECIATE YOUR DESPERATION, I DON'T APPROVE OF YOUR METHODS. THIS SHANGHAI LEAVES MY HOME UNPROTECTED...
... AND THIS "MESSIAH" BUSINESS JUST MAKES ME PLAIN UNCOMFORTABLE. BUT THAT BEING SAID...
... I COULD NEVER TURN AWAY FROM THIS.
OF COURSE I'LL HELP. WHATEVER IT TAKES — WHOEVER THIS TYRANT IS, I'LL —
...

YOUR SUN. IT'S RED.
A RED SUN.
YOU REALLY SHOULD FIRE YOUR RESEARCH PERSON...
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
...
NO. LET'S JUST MAKE THIS QUICK.

WH-WHAT IS IT?! I CAN'T HIT IT!
I DON'T CARE WHAT IT IS! FOR HIS GLORY AND NAME, MAKE IT BLEED!
I CAN DO THIS.
THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME... ISN'T THERE? DIDN'T I MOVE A PLANET UNDER A RED SUN?
SURE... AND IT NEARLY KILLED ME. AND I HADN'T JUST FOUGHT A WAR. AND I WASN'T ON A PLANET WITH A GRAVITY FORTY TIMES EARTH'S. AND --
ENOUGH.
IT'S ONE BAD MAN. DOESN'T MATTER IF THE SUN IS PLAID WITH POLKA DOTS, I CAN TAKE ONE MAN...
...AND ONE MAN'S ARMY.
WITHOUT BACKUP.
NO PROBLEM.

SEE? SEE HOW HE FIGHTS FOR US! IT'S LIKE WE TOLD YOU -- HE IS THE ONE! HE'S THE ONE!
"GRANITE MOTHER KNEW! A HERO WOULD COME FROM FAR AWAY AND DELIVER US FROM TYRANNY AS IF ONE OF OUR OWN!"
HE'S THE ONE..
HE
:HUFF-
:HUFF: STUPID GRAVITY.
COME ON. NOT YET. HOLD IT TOGETHER.. JUST A LITTLE LONGER..
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS INSOLENCE?!
'S ABOUT TIME

WHO AMONG YOU BACKWARD WORMS HAS DARED RAISE A HAND TO MY MEN?! WHO LONGS TO HAVE THEIR VERY SOUL GNASHED BETWEEN MY JAWS?!
WHOSE BLOOD WILL SOON ADORN THE BOOTHEEL OF THE TYRANT?!
THAT WOULD BE ME
S-S-SUPER-M-MAN?
KANJAR RO. "WOULD-BE CONQUEROR." HEH.
FINALLY GOT ONE, HUH? HOPE YOU ENJOYED IT

N-NO!
I AM THE TYRANT! I WON THIS PLANET! I WON AND YOU CAN'T TAKE IT FROM ME!
KONNNNNG
URF
TH-THAT [illegible]
E-EVEN AT MAXIMUM POWER, I DIDN'T THINK THE GAMMA GAUNTLETS WOULD EVEN MESS HIS HAIR WHAT -
!

THIS ENDS TODAY, KANJAR! THESE PEOPLE ARE GOING TO SEE WHAT YOU TRULY ARE --
--A BULLY! A SNIVELLING COWARD WHO "CONQUERS" WORLDS BY BEATING DOWN PACIFISTS!
THEY KNOW WHAT I AM, ALIEN!
I AM A GOD! AN ANGRY GOD!
YOU'RE TOAST --
DZZKT
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! BEAT HIM!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A HERO.
THIS IS WHAT YOU SENT TO KILL ME, MORONS?!
THIS IS YOUR "MESSIAH"?!

KOLLAPSING
HE IS NOTHING BY MY MEASURE!
LIKE THE REST OF THE FILTH THIS PLANET BREEDS -- HE CRUMPLES AT MY TOUCH!
A "MESSIAH" OF MEAT AND BLOOD FOR YOUR MASTER!
ST-STOP CALLING ME A M-MESSIAH. I --
:MSN:-- RINGING. STOP RINGING NOW
HOW CAN I BEAT HIM WHEN I CAN'T STAND --?
HOW DID HE GET SO STRONG?
SU-SUPERMAN? IS THIS PART OF A PLAN? BECAUSE I DON'T THINK --
PLEASE... GET UP. Y-YOU HAVE TO GET UP --
A-ARE YOU AFRAID?

NO... JUST ANGRY. AND SOMETIMES WHEN I GET ANGRY, I FORGET TO LOOK AT MY... OPTIONS.
THERE. I KNEW IT WASN'T JUST THIS PLACE -- KANJAR IS STRONGER --
BECAUSE HE'S FEEDING OFF YOU. . ALL OF YOU. YOUR... FEAR.
SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR PHYSIOLOGY ALLOWS HIM TO SIPHON ENERGY OFF YOUR PEOPLE WITH THAT "ENERGY-ROD."
YOU HAVE TO TELL THEM, SALLY. . YOU HAVE TO TELL THEM HE EATS YOUR FEAR --
YOU MUST NOT FEAR HIM.
HOW, SUPERMAN? AFTER WHAT HE DID TO YOU -- ?
OH, GOD...
HE USED ME TO SET AN EXAMPLE IF I CAN SAVE A UNIVERSE... AND HE CAN DEFEAT ME..
WHO WILL STAND AGAINST ME NOW! WHO WOULD DIE BY MY WRATH?!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HE WANTED TO SET AN EXAMPLE I'M GOING TO TRY TO GIVE HIM ONE.
BUT -- I THINK HE MIGHT KILL YOU --
FROM THE SECOND I SAW THAT RED SUN, SALLY, I KNEW THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE I MIGHT NOT COME BACK.
?-YOU KNEW THIS COULD HAPPEN? WH-WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING?

"YOU ASKED FOR HELP. THAT WAS ALL THAT MATTERED."
HOW SHALL I TEND TO YOUR MESSIAH? HOW SHALL I CARVE YOUR SUPERMAN?
DON'T CALL ME. SUPERMAN.
RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW
I AM JUST A MAN.
A MAN WHO, IN ANOTHER PLACE FAR AWAY, HAS GIFTS... BUT HERE, THE ONLY GIFT I HAVE IS SIGHT. I SEE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE, KANJAR RO.
A PARASITE. A WORM WHO PLAYS AT GREATNESS BUT CAN NEVER KNOW WHAT GREATNESS IS. A MONSTER WHO CANNOT EARN RESPECT, SO HE THRIVES ON FEAR...
AND I KNOW HOW TO BEAT YOU.
WITH A CLUB, AND SOME PRETTY RHETORIC?
I WILL HANG THE SHREDS OF YOUR CORPSE FROM EVERY CORNER OF THIS PLANET AS A REMINDER —
— OF WHAT THIS WORM CAN DO TO A "MAN"
THEN DO IT. KILL ME. BETTER YET —
"ABSORB" ME AS YOU HAVE SO MANY OTHERS! TAKE MY SPIRIT, KANJAR!
NO!

I WILL -- AFTER I BREAK THAT BODY OF YOURS TO PURIFY THAT SOUL BEFORE I DEVOUR IT!
HEH. YOU SEE? LIKE I SAID I B-BEAT YOU
PAIN HAS TURNED YOUR MIND TO WASTE, SUPERMAN!
STAY DOWN AND KNOW YOUR ROLE IN MY WORLD
YOU... YOU CAN'T "DEVOUR" ME YOU C-CAN'T BEAT ME BECAUSE NO MATTER WH-WHAT
MY SPIRIT WON'T EVER FALL DOWN! I WILL NEVER FEAR YOU
WORDS! WORDS, SUPERMAN! YOU ARE BROKEN! I AM TRIUMPHANT!
TO P-PROVE T... YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME, KANJAR BECAUSE YOU'LL NEVER BREAK ME.
AS YOU WISH --
DOINK

S'ALLAH! COME BACK HERE! WHAT ARE YOU -- ?!
GET AWAY FROM HIM. YOU WANT A SOUL TO BREAK --
-- DEVOUR ME.
WE BROUGHT HIM HERE! BROUGHT HIM HERE TO FIGHT OUR BATTLES FOR US!
AND HE DID.. EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW IT WOULD KILL HIM.
IF WE AREN'T WILLING TO STAND WITH HIM AS HE DOES --
--WE DON'T DESERVE TO BE SAVED!
ANOTHER ONE.. TAINTED.
BUT NOT SO MUCH THAT SHE CANNOT BE DEVOURED TO SERVE HER LORD
GOOD GIRL. STAY BRAVE JUST STAY
ZZWAK

THE YOUNG ONES ARE INDEED... THE TASTIEST.
SO FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUS HOPES AND DREAMS... PREGNANT WITH LIFE --
-- I THINK I SHALL HAVE TO HAVE SECONDS.
I THINK...
... YOU'D BETTER SPEND THE TIME PLANNING RETREAT... "MASTER."
LOOK! SHE --
S'ALLAH'S NOT -- SHE'S NOT DEAD!
THE TYRANT CAN'T HARM HER --
OH... NOT GOOD.
AS I WAS SAYING...

POW
YOU WON'T BREAK US! NEVER AGAIN!
NO. I STILL HAVE POWER -- I AM STILL --
B'DARTHA!
B'DARTHA!
B'DARTHA!
A LITTLE GIRL, KAMJAR. NOT A "SUPERMAN..."
THAT'S WHO HAD TO BEAT YOU... THAT'S WHERE THE KINGDOM FALLS.

AND SO, LED BY THE VOICE OF THEIR OWN... THE B'DARTHANS ROSE UP AGAINST THE "TYRANT" KANJAR RO.
WITH HIS LINK TO THEIR SPIRITS SEVERED, KANJAR WAS JUST A MAN. HIS ARMY AN OUTNUMBERED MINORITY.
THE FIRST OF MANY BATTLES TO COME WAS OVER IN HALF A DAY.

HEH... JUST LIKE... THE OLD DAYS, EH, SUPERMAN?
AND JUST LIKE THE OLD DAYS... I WILL TURN THIS DEFEAT INTO THE SEEDS OF REVENGE.
REMEMBER THIS DAY, SUPERMAN. FOR THIS IS THE DAY YOU DOOMED THE EARTH.
YEAH... JUST LIKE THE OLD DAYS, KANJAR. YOU THINK YOU CAN KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FOR ME, SALLY?

YOU HAVE MY WORD, SUPERMAN.
THERE WILL BE MORE CONFLICT TO COME... BUT WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR US THIS DAY...
YOU HELPED US RECOVER OUR COLLECTIVE SPIRIT, SUPERMAN. WHATEVER YOU WISH IS YOURS.

I WISH YOU A SPEEDY, BLOODLESS CONFLICT. I WISH YOU STRENGTH. BUT IF IT ISN'T TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO ASK...
...I COULD REALLY USE SOME SUN.
END

NEXT: WAR GOD, WHITE FOX & HATE FURNACE!

HERE AT LAST!
THE DARK KNIGHT STRIKES AGAIN
FRANK MILLER
LYNN VARLEY
3 ISSUES december
DC COMICS dccomics.com
Call 1-888-COMIC BOOK FOR YOUR NEAREST COMICS SHOP.
™ AND © DC COMICS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

RE: ACTION

After last issue, Bizarro decided he should not stay or answer questions on ACTION COMICS #780 in this letter column. Goodbye!

MARK ANDERSON
(MANDERSON@TRU.EASTLINK.CA)
POSTED TO DCODCUMAIL@AOL.COM

Dear DC:

I have collected comics for over 20 years, and this is the first letter/e-mail I've ever written. I just wanted to let DC know how much I am enjoying "Our Worlds At War." That is all.

Why your letter so long and confusing, Mark? Now Bizarro not know how you feel about "Our Worlds At War"! Sheesh!

CHRISTOPHER STANSFIELD
NEW YORK, NY

Dear Re: Action:

The (re)introduction of a Superman-class villain named General Zod makes me think that you're going to use "Our Worlds At War" to cement in place the "changes" you introduced in "Return to Krypton" a few months back. I have to add my voice to those who have protested this **retro***active (emphasis on "retro") change in Superman's origins. John Byrne's revamp stressed the "man" in Superman and made it easier to understand Supes's willingness to fight for humanity—and the disparity between Krypton and Earth (as well as Kal-El's being "born" on Earth) were essential parts of his conception. Moreover, replacing Byrne's Krypton with a version that was dated by the '60s is as backwards as you can possibly get. Nostalgia is fun, but is there really a place in modern comic books for alien astronauts in miniskirts and flip hairstyles, and rocketships that look like they belong in a Disneyland kiddie ride? I don't think so, and I hope you end up agreeing with me, for Superman's sake.*

You am in luck, Christopher—Bizarro totally agree with you about retroactive elements.

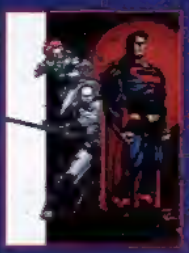
PHILLIP POTTER
REGO PARK, NY

Dear DC:

I can't believe you blew up Kansas in ACTION COMICS #780. I read this a few days ago, and I'm **still** *shocked. I beg you…don't tell us you're getting rid of Ma and/or Pa Kent!*

Bizarro thought they should get rid of Kents, too, Phillip; they do nothing for their son! But as soon as me start hoping, they bring back Pa Kent! She sure am beautiful! Ick! Hopefully, the writers learn their lesson and let Ma Kent stay a dead man!

NEXT WEEK: ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #600 Man of Steel vs. United States President by Joe Casey, Mike Wieringo and José Marzán Jr. The Superman Dailies by Jeph Loeb, Tim Sale, Mark Schultz, Dave Gibbons, Joe Kelly and Carlos Meglia, plus Superman's Origin in pinups by Chris Bachalo, J. Scott Campbell, Humberto Ramos, Lenil F. Yu and more!



NEXT MONTH in ACTION #787: Meet the Japanese Justice of the deadly duo of Byakko and Gunshin with Joe Kelly, Pascual Ferry and Walden Wong!

dccomics.com
KEYWORD: DC COMICS ON AOL

This month's cover am by Pascual Ferry, Richard Friend, Richard and Tanya Horie!

DC COMICS • 1700 BROADWAY • NEW YORK, NY 10019

JENETTE KAHN President & Editor-in-Chief
PAUL LEVITZ Executive VP & Publisher
MIKE CARLIN Executive Editor
EDDIE BERGANZA Editor
TOM PALMER, JR. Assistant Editor
GEORG BREWER VP-Design & Retail Product Development
RICHARD BRUNING VP — Creative Director
PATRICK CALDON Senior VP — Finance & Operations
DOROTHY CROUCH VP — Licensed Publishing
TERRI CUNNINGHAM VP — Managing Editor
JOEL EHRLICH Senior VP — Advertising & Promotions
ALISON GILL Executive Director — Manufacturing
LILLIAN LASERSON VP & General Counsel
JIM LEE Editorial Director — WildStorm
JOHN NEE VP & General Manager — WildStorm
CHERYL RUBIN VP — Licensing & Merchandising
BOB WAYNE VP — Sales & Marketing